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AUG 04 2008

In re Application of :
Craig D. Tipton et al. :
Application No. 10/645,373 : DECISION ON PETITION
Filed: August 21, 2003 : PURSUANT TO
Attorney Docket No.: 3202R : 37 C.F.R. § 1.181(A)
Title: MULTIFUNCTIONAL :
DISPERSANTS :
:

This is a decision on the petition filed June 20, 2008, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.181(a), requesting that the holding of abandonment in the above-identified application be withdrawn.

This petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.181(a) is **DISMISSED**.

It is noted in passing that the heading for this petition contains an incorrect filing date for this application. It will be presumed that this erroneous filing date is a typographical error.

BACKGROUND

The above-identified application became abandoned for failure to reply in a timely manner to the notice of non-compliant amendment, mailed December 5, 2007, which set a period for reply of one month. No further responses were received, and no extensions of time pursuant to Rule 1.136(a) were requested. Accordingly, the above-identified application became abandoned on January 6, 2007. A notice of abandonment was mailed on June 16, 2008.

RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE C.F.R. AND MPEP

37 C.F.R. § 1.134 sets forth, *in toto*:

An Office action will notify the applicant of any non-statutory or shortened statutory time period set for reply to an Office action. Unless the applicant is notified in writing that a reply is required in less than six months, a maximum period of six months is allowed.

37 C.F.R. § 1.135 sets forth, *in toto*:

(a) If an applicant of a patent application fails to reply within the time period provided under § 1.134 and § 1.136, the application will become abandoned unless an Office action indicates otherwise.

(b) Prosecution of an application to save it from abandonment pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section must include such complete and proper reply as the condition of the application may require. The admission of, or refusal to admit, any amendment after final rejection or any amendment not responsive to the last action, or any related proceedings, will not operate to save the application from abandonment.

(c) When reply by the applicant is a bona fide attempt to advance the application to final action, and is substantially a complete reply to the non-final Office action, but consideration of some matter or compliance with some requirement has been inadvertently omitted, applicant may be given a new time period for reply under § 1.134 to supply the omission.

Section 711.03(c)(I)(A) of the MPEP sets forth, *in toto*:

In *Delgar v. Schulyer*, 172 USPQ 513 (D.D.C. 1971), the court decided that the Office should mail a new Notice of Allowance in view of the evidence presented in support of the contention that the applicant's representative did not receive the original Notice of Allowance. Under the reasoning of *Delgar*, an allegation that an Office action was never received may be considered in a petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment. If adequately supported, the Office may grant the petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment and remail the Office action. That is, the reasoning of *Delgar* is applicable regardless of whether an application is held abandoned for failure to timely pay the issue fee (35 U.S.C. 151) or for failure to prosecute (35 U.S.C. 133).

To minimize costs and burdens to practitioners and the Office, the Office has modified the showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office action. The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner describing the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. The statement should establish that the docketing system is sufficiently reliable. It is expected that the record would include, but not be limited to, the application number, attorney

docket number, the mail date of the Office action and the due date for the response.

Practitioner must state that the Office action was not received at the correspondence address of record, and that a search of the practitioner's record(s), including any file jacket or the equivalent, and the application contents, indicates that the Office action was not received. A copy of the record(s) used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received is required.

A copy of the practitioner's record(s) required to show non-receipt of the Office action should include the master docket for the firm. That is, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the master docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. If no such master docket exists, the practitioner should so state and provide other evidence such as, but not limited to, the following: the application file jacket; incoming mail log; calendar; reminder system; or the individual docket record for the application in question.

The showing outlined above may not be sufficient if there are circumstances that point to a conclusion that the Office action may have been lost after receipt rather than a conclusion that the Office action was lost in the mail (e.g., if the practitioner has a history of not receiving Office actions).

Evidence of nonreceipt of an Office communication or action (e.g., Notice of Abandonment or an advisory action) other than that action to which reply was required to avoid abandonment would not warrant withdrawal of the holding of abandonment. Abandonment takes place by operation of law for failure to reply to an Office action or timely pay the issue fee, not by operation of the mailing of a Notice of Abandonment. See *Lorenz v. Finkl*, 333 F.2d 885, 889-90, 142 USPQ 2d 29-30 (CCPA 1964); *Krahn v. Commissioner*, 15 USPQ2d 1823, 1824 (E.D. Va 1990); *In re Application of Fischer*, 6 USPQ2d 1573, 1574 (Comm'r Pat. 1988).

ANALYSIS

With this petition, Petitioner has stated that the notice of non-compliant amendment of December 5, 2007 was not received at the correspondence address of record, and has provided two screen shots of an electronic docket system.

However, Petitioner has failed to **describe** the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. Petitioner has explained that the docket clerk maintains this system and that all mailings from the Office are "received by her for docketing," however he has not explained how this electronic docket system operates. It follows

that Petitioner has not established that this electronic docket system is **sufficiently reliable**.

Moreover, the petition is silent in regards to the performance of a **search** of Petitioner's records, including any file jacket or the equivalent, along with the application contents.

Furthermore, regarding the copy of the records used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received, Petitioner has provided two screen shots: a listing all docket entries for this particular application, and a "screen view" of this information. The print-out which contains **the screen view is illegible**, and as such, this submission has not been considered by the undersigned.

Finally, Petitioner has neither provided a copy of the **master docket** for the firm, nor stated that no such master docket exists.

CONCLUSION

Any reply must be submitted within **TWO MONTHS** from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are permitted. The reply should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.181(a)". This is not a final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C § 704.

The renewed petition should indicate in a prominent manner that the attorney handling this matter is Paul Shanoski, and may be submitted by mail¹, hand-delivery², or facsimile³. Registered users of EFS-Web may alternatively submit a response to this decision via EFS-Web⁴. If responding by mail, Petitioner is advised not to place the undersigned's name on the envelope. Only the information that appears in the footnote should be included - adding anything else to the address will delay the delivery of the response to the undersigned.

Telephone inquiries regarding this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3225⁵. All other inquiries

1 Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA, 22313-1450.

2 Customer Window, Randolph Building, 401 Dulaney Street, Alexandria, VA, 22314.

3 (571) 273-8300- please note this is a central facsimile number.

4 <https://sportal.uspto.gov/authenticate/authenticateuserlocalepf.html>

5 Petitioner will note that all practice before the Office should be in writing, and the action of the Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. See 37 C.F.R. § 1.2. As such, Petitioner is reminded that no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for any of Petitioner's further action(s).

concerning examination procedures should be directed to the Technology Center.

/Paul Shanoski/
Paul Shanoski
Senior Attorney
Office of Petitions